

power, skill, and efficiency in action. In time, they become burdens on the active members of the group. " As a man grows old and weak he loses the only claim to respect which savages understand ; but superstitious fear then comes to his protection. He will die soon and then his ghost can take revenge." ¹ That is to say that the mores can interfere to inculcate duties of respect to the old which will avert from them the conclusion that they ought to die. In respect to the aged, therefore, we find two different sets of mores : (a) those in which the aged are treated with arbitrary and conventional respect; and (b) those in which the doctrine is that those who become burdens must be removed, by their own act or that of their relatives. In abortion, infanticide, and killing the old there is a large element of judgment as to what societal welfare requires, although they are executed generally from immediate personal selfishness. The custom of the group, by which the three classes of acts are approved as right and proper, must contain a judgment that they are conducive, and often necessary, to welfare.

316. Abortion and infanticide. Abortion and infanticide are two customs which have the same character and purpose. The former prevents child bearing; the latter child rearing. They are folkways which are aggregates of individual acts under individual motives, for an individual might so act without a custom in the group. The acts, however, when practiced by many, and through a long time, change their character. They are no longer individual acts of resistance to pain. They bear witness to uniform experiences, and to uniform reactions against the experiences, in the way of judgments as to what it is

expedient to
do, and motives of policy. They also suggest to,
and teach, the
rising generation. They react, in the course of time,
on the welfare
of the group. They affect its numbers and its
quality, as we
now believe, although we cannot find that any
group has ever
been forced by its experience to put these customs
under taboo.²

317. Relation of parent and child. Children add
to the weight
of the struggle for existence of their parents.
The relation of

¹ Lippert, *Kulturgesch*, I, 229.

² Ancient India may be an exception.